

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the present patent application based on the following remarks are respectfully requested.

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-2, under 35 U.S.C. §102(b), as allegedly being anticipated by Japanese Patent Abstract 2001-151597 (JP '597); and claims 3-5 and 7-8, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), as allegedly being unpatentable over JP '597. The Examiner also indicated that claim 6 contains allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Applicants disagrees with the Examiner's rejections. However, solely in an effort to expedite the examination of the present application, by this Amendment, Applicants have cancelled claims 1-2, and 6 and have amended independent claim 3 by incorporating the allowable subject matter of claim 6, as indicated by the Examiner.

As such, after entry of this Amendment, claims 3-5 and 7-8 are presented for examination of which claim 3 is the sole independent claim. Because, claim 3 now contains allowable subject matter, as noted by the Examiner, the withdrawal of the associated rejections are respectfully requested. Furthermore, because claims 4-5 and 7-8 depend from claim 3, respectively, claims 4-5 and 7-8 are also allowable by virtue of dependency as well as for their additional recitations. Accordingly, each of presented claims 3-5 and 7-8 are allowable.

Applicants further submit that all the claims are commonly owned by the joint inventors and there are no claims that were not commonly owned at a time a later invention was made.

All matters having been addressed and in view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully requests the entry of this Amendment, the Examiner's reconsideration of this application, and the immediate allowance of all pending claims.

Applicants' Representative remains ready to assist the Examiner in any way to facilitate and expedite the prosecution of this matter. If any point remains in issue which the

Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, please contact the Undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Please charge any fees associated with the submission of this paper to Deposit Account Number **03-3975**. The Commissioner for Patents is also authorized to credit any over payments to the above-referenced Deposit Account.

Respectfully Submitted,

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